

HOUSE RESOLUTION 264

By Armstrong

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Captain Marcus Alford, Sr., Tennessee Army National Guard, of Knoxville.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, one such courageous volunteer was Captain Marcus R. Alford Sr., 1-230th Air Cavalry Squadron of the Tennessee Army National Guard, who was stationed in Iraq at Camp Speicher, and who died in pursuit of freedom and democracy for the people of Iraq; and

WHEREAS, like thousands of others of this Nation's sons and daughters, Captain Alford did not shrink from serving in a combat zone, believing in the justice of the cause to protect our national security and liberty and to free the Iraqi people from the chains of injustice; and

WHEREAS, a beloved father and son, Captain Alford now lies at rest in the sacred ground of America, which he loved so dearly and gave his life to protect; and

WHEREAS, by displaying the patriotism and honor for which he was well known, Marcus Alford was the embodiment of the American hero; he believed deeply in America and the virtue of its cause, never hesitating to sacrifice himself to defend his beloved Nation, its citizens, or a fellow serviceman; and

WHEREAS, a 2000 graduate of South-Doyle High School, Captain Marcus R. Alford Sr., was a four-year member of the JROTC program at South-Doyle, where he was a favorite of his

fellow students and teachers alike, who enjoyed the bright, fun-loving young man voted "Wittiest" by his senior class; and

WHEREAS, a 2004 graduate of Carson-Newman College, Captain Alford was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in December 2004 from Carson-Newman College Reserve Officer Training Corps in Jefferson City, Tennessee, having joined the Tennessee Army National Guard in April 2000 as an ROTC cadet; and

WHEREAS, in January 2005, he was assigned as Liaison Officer, Detachment 2, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-230th Air Cavalry Squadron (ACS). In August 2008, he was assigned as Platoon Leader, Troop B, 1-230th ACS, and Operations Officer for the 107th Regiment February-March 2009; and

WHEREAS, Captain Alford was mobilized in March 2009 and deployed to Iraq as a Platoon Leader with Troop C, 1-230th Cavalry Regiment in July, seeing duty in northern Iraq; and

WHEREAS, on February 21, 2010, Captain Alford and fellow soldier, Chief Warrant Officer Two Billie Jean Grinder of Gallatin, Tennessee, were flying their OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter near Qayyarah Airfield West (Q-West) about thirty miles south of Mosul in Northern Iraq when it made a hard landing, tragically ending both their lives; and

WHEREAS, a man of great courage and gallantry, Captain Alford lost his life while serving his country and the cause in which he believed, and for that sacrifice, he deserves proper recognition; as a member of the Tennessee Army National Guard, he proudly continued an essential tradition of American society: the concept of the citizen-soldier; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his distinguished military service, Captain Alford was awarded the Air Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal-3rd Award, and the Tennessee War Service Ribbon; and

WHEREAS, a devoted father and son, Captain Marcus Alford, Sr., is survived by his two beloved children, Amya Faith and Marcus, Jr., his mother, Karen Y. Ray, and his father, Michael Alford, as well as a host of dear friends and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, this valiant Tennessean leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Captain Alford's dedication to excellence and his love for his family, his fellow soldiers, and his country, as exemplified by his valiant defense of all that he held dear, stand as enduring examples of the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our Nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly should pause to remember the singular patriotism, courage, and commitment to duty of this exceptional soldier and human being, the late Captain Marcus R. Alford, Sr., Tennessee Army National Guard, whose loss is mourned by a grateful nation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Captain Marcus R. Alford, Sr., a man of impeccable character, limitless courage, and stalwart commitment to the defense of his Nation as a member of the Tennessee Army National Guard, reflecting fondly upon his bravery and dedication to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and friends of Captain Alford.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.